Dear Bill, Dect, Nat. Eng. 8/29/74

The trouble with a one-man operation is sometimes more that there is only one mind than that there is only one man to do too much. I should have phoned you earlier and I should have spoken more fully yesterday. I'll explain both and then tell you what I have and how I got it, which is also a story.

I have had all the work on this book to do. When I am the publisher and have no employees, you know how much that is. And for several preceived need I was rushing like hell. One is that it can influence what means much, I think, amendment to the Freedom of Information law that in the debates is specifically said to have the intent of nullifying the wrongful judicial interpretations in one of my cases, to change the law back to its original meaning.

At the same time my work on the King assassination is being stolen rather openly by a Hollywood outfit and I haven't the money even to hire a lawyer.

And in addition, as I told you for the first time there is TV interest. I know that interest doesn't mean contract, but before there was never the guts to have interest. With the pressures put on TV over Watergate reporting added, I've been apprehensive about attracting pressure on those who yield to it. I did not have in mind either that you or your people would steal my work, or that I don't trsut you or that you would allow yourselves to be pressured. Especially when the book is coming out anyway. But when I know (and have copies of) the surveillance on me, I was seeking without thinking it through to avoiding the application of pressure to others.

I had an agent when JFK was killed and a deal on two other books. From my own federal investigative and intelligence experience I wrote a lead and summary the topic sentence of which was "Lee Harvey Oswald could not have been personna non grata to the FBI." In those days there were many magazines I considered a possible market. Instead I was greeted with hysteria I later learned was a fair representation of the publishing attitude and lost my agent when I persisted.

Since then I have been seeking proof of this I have a book, Agent Oswald, partly written. I have much new for it, some already written and some the most shocking. In this quest, for about eight years I sought a top-secret session of the Warren Commission members only- all staff except Rankin kept out- that was held on this very subject. The government gave me more trouble on this than on the autopsy material I sought, even inventing new ways of stalling me which kept them technically inside the law while violating it. Meanwhile, I was busy on many things including the work I've done on the King case and as Ray's investigator.

(I never make any public use of this. But the fact is that the basis for the court reversal we have obtained is Frame-Up. Thereafter I did an investigation for two purposes, the utlimate trial and the habeas corpus petition with which we have not only

prevailed but have established a new precedent the State is now appealing. Bud Fensterwald has actually had little to do with the case and the loud-talking and foolish-talking Livingston even less. I have done all the investigating, a young lawyer named Jim Lesar has done all the legal work, and on the habeas corups as on other matters, we work closely. He is the rare younger man who is willing to listen to what the experiences of an older man who has faced political problems indicate should be considered. Or, between the two os us we have done all the real work.)

What really reminded me of the screwing the feds gave me was the nomination of Ford to be vice president, as you'll see in the book but is not here relevant unless your people carry a torch to burn Ford, which I do not presume. Reminded when there was less than the usual work in the Ray matter, I asked Jim to file a suit for me for this transcript. There ensued the usual trickery but this time with a difference. The government was even more desparate. So desparate that it made serious misrepresentations to the court. I slammed back with an affidavit to which I attached the kinds of proofs you know I have from inside the Commission and demolished their argument, raising serious questions about the integrity of their whole line and conduct. They responded by dragging J. Lee Rankin out for the first time in all these proceedings, to swear that he had been ordered to apply a top secret classification to this particular proceeding. Well, difficult as it is to prove a negative, my work in this area had been so detailed that I could and I did under oath, which confronted the government with an entirely new problem, charging Rankin or me with perjury. To be sure this was not lost on them and partocularly with the nomination of the USAttorney, Silbert, then awaiting confirmation, I discussed on my phone with Jim his demanding of Silbert that he charge Rankin or me with prejury. I'm telling you what we did, not that I know it caused what happened. I can find other explanations, too. But the fact is that at this juncture the government just quietly mailed me this truly sensational transcript.

The prupose of that early session was to ponder not only the reports that had been withheld from the Commission members for a month, that Oswald had been a federal informant. It turned into a session skilfully led by Rankin into a deliberation of how they could "wipe out" this "nasty rumor." Not investigate it, suppress it. They reached decision on what would not and could not be acceptable only. What they did in the end is precisely what they decided could and should not be done or accepted by the people. They decided that certain named witnesses had to be called. They then proceeded not to call a single one; Then then turned to other subjects, as I will.

During eht course of all of this Allen Dulles let his hair down as one would never imagine the former head of any intelligence agency ever did. He described how they lie and why and is explicit in saying they perjure themselves regularly, that he would tell the President only the real truth (and this is the guy who put the shiv in Ike

over the U-2 (they go into aspects of that, too). Dulles is specific in saying that he need not tell even the Secretary of Defense the truth!

He goes into how they lie about whether or not someone is an agent and how they have it arranged so nobody can tell they are lying, how many people know (two) and how they hide it (code only they know).

The members had questions. Remember that Russell story? He was chairman of the Senate oversight committee on the CIA until I have him the material of which you know. He said if you knew someone for five years and knew he was your guy you would swear he was a total stranger, that you had never laid eyes on him? Sure, Dulles said.

On and on likw this in the most thorough condemnation of the sppoks I have even seen And for good measure Dulles included the FBI.

In a fascinating double entendre there is the inference Alger Hiss could have been framed. It comes when Dulles is laying out how they work and how they arrange to "compromise" people. The device was the rug given Hiss. It could later be used to blackmail him. The meaning is unclear and can be taken two ways. But one of them is that Hiss was framed.

There is more in this part-there are about 90 pages in all- but I think this gives you the flavor.

They go onto other aspects of the assassination. On the shooting and the medical evidence what they ~~hear~~ here say - and it was after they had the autopsy and related stuff- they give an entirely different account than in the Report. From another book I have written I know this is the right one. They here destroy the Report they months later issued. They here discuss the medical and shooting evidence that proves there was a conspriacy. Example, that wound allegedly in the back of the neck? It was "below the shoulder blade." How did they know? This exposes another of the enduring lies, they have a picture showing it! (On this I have more in the book from my own files, other admission that they ahd full color pictures of the autopsy about which they lied.)

Other things - it would take a short book to go into them all- are in this amazing document. And I think a number of top stories at just the time your competition is pecializing in them but with crap, not solid stuff like this. This is so solid and so hot that it can turn the whole thing around. And let me tell you, if it doesn't I have what can. Already written and with enough to put people in jail for perjury if anyone had the disposition.

I have not been able to read either the popular papers of the daily press for months because with all of this I have been doing my own and rather successful Watergate investigation. When I finally got this transcript and dropped everything I could to put this book together I had almost completed the draft of The Unimpeachment of Richard Nixon, started in April. I do have what had never appeared and I have

put together what the official investigators could or would not or both. So, I've just been too busy to keep up. However, people send me clippings and I assume from this that the Tatler is hitting you some.

When people virtually invent stuff they can. But here I'm offering the most solid and I think the most sensational material yet.

In fact, if you feel this competitive pressure, there are other mutual interests we could well have. I think you can run them out of the assassination business with the kind of comprehensible and solid poroofs I laone have that with attention could force a new investigation. Here I am talking about such evidence as was not in the Commission's files that I have obtained officially.

This is off the top of the head. I got up earlier for it, to make the one mail we have each day and to finish what I have to do in prepartion for the printing of this book, promos. I forgot a precious line from Dulles, that they use "terribly bad characters." One of the members repeats and there is some amplification, that local police also do.

I'm sorry we are so separated by miles because if we could ever sit down there could be more stories, all supported by the hottest kinds of documents. Like Ruby on conspiracy. (He was nuts when he said there was one but he did say it and there is a record.) I have what is supposed to be his notes to his lawyer. One reads (from memory) "It all began with a contract for $250,000."

I think this book is worth top price. And I have to hold out for it because my young lawyer friend and associate has borrowed the money for us to print this book. If you go for it I will then offer the contents of this other completed book in return for a 5,000 print of it and let you use what you want before it appears.

From my mail there is more assassination interest now than there has been since 1967. And despite the difficulty of knowing about them and of finding me now, more books are selling than since then, too. If you want to really clobber The Tatler and any other competition on this subject, I can do it for you. With stuff that is simple and comprehensible and unlike their trash, absolutely solid, all official documents and 100% beyond question. What I'm saying is that it is at once suitable for popular presentation and also responsible. It doesn't have to be jazzed up.

Sorry I didn't think of writing you yesterday and driving into town to mail it and save a day when you said you would be leaving on vacation. This would have had a better chance of reaching you before you leave. However, I assume that if you have left your secretary will know what to do and that I can trust any of you.

As things now stand, Cesar and I are going off on a key investigative-legal trip just before you return. I don't know if we'll be able to keep this schedule or if we'll be back, as we now plan, when you return. There are more things for us to do in

preparation for the coming evidentiary hearing on 10/22/74. However, if you want to reach me my wife will know where I am. She'll be working Mondays and Fridays, tho.

While I've been writing this the news has come on. They are talking about Bloody Harlan. I was an expert on that when the Senate investigated it and lived and worked with the Department of Justice down there for four months during a prosecution. There are what I think would make some good stories. In fact, a friend at CBS News has been wanting to bring me together with the new UMW leadership so we can make some oral histories on that. But don't let this lead you to believe it is deep and scholarly stuff. It deals with assasinations on that level, how they were contracted and subcontracted and the odd, human-interest twists to some.

I'll end with a story that may amuse you whether or not you could go for it. The coal association had a strong-arm gang, all deputized. It decided that an old man John Lewis had sent in should be killed. They gave their chief $400 and the dynamite and told him to do it. He decided that although nobody ever got prosecuted for murders there why should he run the risk. So he got another, gave him half the $400 and the dynamite and subcontracted. This actually happened until the price was down to $10 that one Chris Patterson gave of the $20 he'd gotten and one R.C.Tackett blew up the Parrott Hotel in Pineville to kill this 80 year old one-legged organizer who was sleeping in an old metal bed. The explosion, which demolished that wing of the hotel, turned the bed over as it went into the air. It came down on "Peggy" Dwyer and saved his life!

Whether or not this reaches you in time, I hope you have a restful vacation.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg